TALES OF TRUTH.

BY A LADY.

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THE SOLDIERS.

SINCE our party had been domeſticated, no interruption had broke the harmony of their "feaſt of reaſon, and their flow of ſoul." Small parties of military had called to refreſh themſelves at the garriſon; but the ladies had not appeared—their pleaſures were ſtill drawn from intellectual reſources that never ceaſing ſpring; and let thoſe who are condemned by neceſſity to ſo ſmall a circle as our friends, (and who are languiſhing for the frivolity of the great world, through which they have hitherto

ſluttered, and fancied themſelves happy), examine with a wiſh to find if the exertion of their intellects will not be a reſource againſt that deplorable liſtleſsneſs, that lethargy of the ſoul, which enſhrouds the faculties, and plunges them *too* often into a gulph from which they never emerge.

If they ſeek, they will find; and as their mental perception clears, and the light of knowledge burſt on their darkened minds, the ſoul will pauſe to view the change, and acquire new vigor from the proſpect, the bright conſtellation of knowledge will expand the heart to the calls of ſocial duty, and the conſciouſneſs of having performed it, will give comfort

to

to that hour which ſplendor cannot gild, nor acclamation exhilirate; that hour when the ſoul retires into itſelf for conſolation. They frequently walked out to enjoy the pure breeze of the atmoſphere, unadulterated with the ſmoke of cities; and as they paced the now deſolated fields, and reflected on the eſtrangement of their friends and kindred, the tear of deep regret would fall from the eye of Mrs. Marſhall and Selina;—there was now no friendly neighbour to viſit after a pleaſant ride, where they uſed to enjoy the ſocial evening in chearful chat, and on the morrow return to renew with increaſe the joys of *home*, that place of comfort. All was changed—every eye was filled with

doubt of his neighbour's fidelity—the father trusted not the son, nor the son the father—unnatural disunion! lamentable exchange! suspicion, and its attendant corruption, for the *solace* of confidence, and the delights of affection.

One day after they returned from a walk, during which the juvenile trio had exhibited a certain brightness of heart and sportiveness of fancy in their conversation, that amused Mrs. Marshall's mind, and cheared her heart, like the sudden rays of sunshine breaking through a cloud.

She conversed freely, and in the most animated manner to Selina of the soldiers; she

ſhe had never ſpoken with ſuch freedom of them ſince the deſcription ſhe gave, prior to her firſt introduction.

She had vigilantly obſerved their conduct and purſuits, not only to Selina and herſelf, but to all with whom they had intercourſe, ſince they had been inmates of her dwelling; there was a conſiſtency marked their actions—a chearfulneſs that proved they did right—becauſe to have done otherwiſe would have been painful: ſo much are we the creatures of habit, that when once the ſtandard of right is erected in our hearts, to deſert it would be of all acts the moſt difficult, and the moſt painful;—this truth points to the importance

of early education, and directs *teachers* to form the *heart* to virtue, ere they too richly ſtore the head with knowledge.

Mrs. Marſhall had attended and approved with maternal delight (of all enjoyments the moſt exquiſite), the chearful freedom of Selina's manner to the youthful heroes, chaſtened by that delicacy which nature teaches, and men of honor appreciate in women.

She obſerved her unwearied perſeverance to increaſe her knowledge; with what eagerneſs ſhe liſtened to the melliſluous language of Rodolpho, and eſſayed to catch his ſtile on ſubjects of erudition; how delighted

lighted alſo ſhe was with the ſprightly ſportive ſallies of Horatio Therſton; his taſte in muſic; his fancy in the imitative art; thoſe elegant paſtimes for hours, when the mind ſeeks relaxation from ſtudy, to ſweeten and increaſe the avidity of a return to its more important purſuits.

To Rodolpho ſhe looked up as to a being of ſuperior intelligence; his converſation elevated her ſoul, and enlarged her ideas; kept her ſublime feelings on the ſtretch of expectation. Horatio purified her taſte, and amuſed her fancy.

Happy Selina! Fortunate combination of characters to give the firſt impreſſion of the manly mind, and prevent the too early

introduction of ſuſpicion, that vitiates the heart before the character is fixed.

Every action of Selina, every ſentiment ſhe uttered of Rodolpho and Horatio, convinced Mrs. Marſhall, that her wiſh to prevent the firſt impreſſion her daughter received of the friends, might not be on her paſſions, was as ſucceſsful as judicious.

Selina's chearfulneſs was rather increaſed than diminiſhed; the ſame charming frankneſs diſtinguiſhed her conduct, and ſpoke in her ſentiments. She admired ſhe had an affection for the friends, but paſſion had no ſhare in her ſenſations for either; ſhe gave no notices that her heart was attached to ought but their virtues. Often as Mrs. Marſhall

Marſhall ſat, apparently attending to their amuſements, her mind would be employed in revolving o'er the probable events that futurity would preſent to her child, when the voice, whoſe mandate none can reſiſt, called her to another world.

War had ſtripped her of her connections, all friendſhip was deſtroyed, and her child would be alone, expoſed to the aſſaults of the *licentious*, more terrible to her feelings than language can deſcribe.

When theſe reflections intruded, her preſages were gloomy, and ſhe would breathe a parent's wiſh, *ardent*, but ſilent, that providence, 'ere he ſummoned her hence, would give her child a protector; then

then the virtues of the friends would paſs in review before her mind, and ſhe thought Therſton was a man likely to make her child happy; there was an evident ſimilarity in their taſte and diſpoſition; and as her penetration continued to keep ſtrict watch, ſhe ſaw, in Therſton's manner to Selina, a tenderneſs, a ſolicitude, indicative of more than friendſhip. She obſerved in ſilence, but increaſed her vigilance, leaving time to unfold the event.

Mrs. Marſhall's penetration was correct; the heart of Horatio paid a more tender tribute than admiration to the beauty and amiability of Selina; and that he had not yet imparted, even to Rodolpho,

he

he loved her; and could a *man* of ſenſe do otherwiſe, ſaid his heart, when he conſulted it?

There is a ſpark of vanity reſident in a deep receſs of the human mind, tho' of its operations we are at the time inſenſible, that purſuades us, on ſome points, there is no appeal from our judgments.

Perhaps, in the breaſt of a lover, its emiſſion is moſt lively, and he forgets that the roſes of flattery, which his ſelf-love preſents, often conceals thorns that torment: love has its *exquiſites*, but they are often *oppoſites*.

Rodolpho

converted into symptoms of an attachment which had no existence.

Lovers are ingenious in tormenting themselves; Rodolpho perceived the state of his friend's heart, but the error in his judgment passed undiscovered. It is one of the delicacies of true friendship not to urge confidence;—Rodolpho thus thought, and did not by questions extort what he perceived his friend wished to conceal.

At this period Rodolpho received an order from his Colonel to return to camp, regimental business requiring his presence for a short time:—it checked the pleasures of the evening that preceded his departure.

"Duty

"Duty calls, my fair friends," ſaid our ſoldier, when he received the order, "and I muſt away—but it's with the hope of a ſpeedy return.

"My friend Horatio has often ſupplied my place in one poſt of danger and difficulty, when circumſtances have called me off to another: the duties of friendſhip he will alſo be as ready to perform as he is qualified; and I ſhall ſuffer my privation of *pleaſure* without murmuring, ſince it will increaſe *his* by extending his power of obliging."

"However limited my power may be," ſaid Horatio, "my wiſhes are boundleſs, and I truſt, my friends (when I fail), will,

will, *like Heaven*, accept the will for the deed."

Horatio expected the morn of his friend's departure with no little intereſt; he reſolved to regard the countenance and manner of both Selina and his friend with minute obſervance at the moment of departure;—he hoped to diſcover a clue to guide his future conduct to Selina by what they might then betray.

The morning came; Selina ſmiled gaily at Rodolpho, as ſhe gave him her hand to kiſs; wiſhed him a ſafe return, and promiſed to be induſtrious in his abſence. No lover like gloom or embarraſſment, was viſible in the manner of either.

Horatio's

Horatio's heart danced with pleaſure, and a multitude of happy days, nay, years, appeared in the perſpective; in five minutes he had drawn the magic circle round him, that deſcribes the boundary of mortal happineſs: joyful ſeaſon of man, when the elaſtic mind ſprings at the gentleſt touch of hope.

Mrs. Marſhall's mind at parting was impreſſed with a gloom ſhe could ſcarcely account for; a thouſand events might happen to call our ſoldier from his preſent ſtation: ſhe felt ſhe had made a *friend* for her child; ſhe feared the privation of their hope his preſence had inſpired; there are periods in the life of every mortal, when the chearful preſages of hope vaniſh before

the

the gloomy preſcience of the mind, affected with recent events that have wounded the ſenſibility;—this was Mrs. Marſhall's experience; but the chearful duty of Selina, was the ſpecific that gave peace to her heart; it was not in her preſence, but in her abſence, the proſpect of futurity was obſcured: they watched the traveller till his form was loſt in diſtance, and then retired to the library to talk of his virtues; 'twas a ſubject on which they were all eloquent.

A volume of Oſſian lay on the table; Rodolpho had been reading in it the evening before; a tear dropt from Mrs. Marſhall's eye as ſhe took it up: there is a ſort of local tenderneſs (if the expreſſion is

allowable) that we feel on viewing sensible objects which were any way connected with an absent or departed friend; they impress their idea more forcibly on our minds, and then, like the pressure of the moon on the ocean, they create a fullness of sorrow or tenderness that can only be relieved by flowing from our eyes.

While the garrison party were talking of Rodolpho, he travelled onward in silent cogitation; the prospect was flat and uninteresting to his taste, which loved to contemplate nature in her boldest images; he thought of the friends he had left, and the different scene to which he was going.

A little

A little after mid-day they came to a wood, where Rodolpho propoſed to ſtop and refreſh himſelf and ſervants.

At that time, in America, there were no comfortable inns, as in this cultivated land, where the weary traveller enjoys the independence it offers, when his well ſtored pockets can command its comforts.

To ſupply this defect, travellers generally provided themſelves with refreſhment, and in the ſhade of ſome umbrageous wood, which are often met with in that part of the world, repoſe, like our honeſt forefathers, and eat a temperate meal.

Rodolpho's ſervant ſpread the repaſt; and when nature was refreſhed, he directed one of the ſoldiers who were with him to remain with their horſes, while with his ſervant and the other ſoldier he wandered into the deeper receſſes of the wood. The atmoſphere, with the gentle undulating motion of the branches of the tall and luxuriant oaks was refreſhingly cool, and the melodious warbling of nature's choriſters, with the otherwiſe ſtillneſs of the wood, lulled his mind into a ſweet forgetfulneſs of the tumultuous ſcene he was going to join, and he ſtrolled on regardleſs of time or diſtance, till he was awoke to more agitated ſenſations, by the luſtre of the ſun, and the azure of the heavens, which exhibited

exhibited an appearance that converged *all* his feelings to curiosity.

A plain, verdant, but of small extent, opened before him, terminated on one side by a cottage embowered in front, and behind it tall oaks rose majestically, and with the luxuriant underwood formed a fence that would apparently yield only to the ax.

Wonder blended itself with curiosity at beholding so peaceful an abode in the midst of a region every where surrounded by the woes of war.

While Rodolpho paused with surprise, a man came out of a part of the wood op-

poſite to the cottage, croſſed the green, his eyes bent on the ground, as if in deep meditation, threw a ſmall bundle of wood from his arms, and entered the embowered path to his ruſtic dwelling.

Rodolpho immediately ordered the men who were a ſhort diſtance behind him to ſheath their weapons—"It muſt be a man of peace dwells here," ſaid he, "ſome being who has fled to ſolitude, to avoid the obſervance of ſcenes which he thinks deſtructive to the ſimplicity of nature, inimical to nature's God."

The firſt impulſe of his mind was to retire unobſerved, that he might not interrupt, by voluntary intruſion, the tranquillity of a being

a being who seemed to be self-exiled; but the singularity of the discovery excited a lively curiosity, and that is a sort of leaven, which insinuates itself into our feelings, and irritates them till it is gratified; and did it not sometimes lead to the discovery of what torments us, its persevering spirit might be ranked among our most valuable mental possessions.

Rodolpho's was not that restless passion of inquisitiveness, the never ceasing attendant on mean minds, whose ignorance swells trifles into magnitude; 'twas the curiosity of sentiment, that he could not resist endeavouring to gratify, and he proceeded towards the cottage.

As he drew near the door the ſame man met him; he was a tall ſpare figure, attired in the ſimple dreſs of a woodman; but the intelligence of his countenance gave expectation of a cultivated mind; his eyes were piercing, the deep lines of his face ſeemed to be the channels of ſorrow—not age; as he appeared not to have reached the meridian of man's life.

Rodolpho paid him the tribute of courteſy, the recluſe returned it, and immediately ſaid: "If chance or curioſity have led you to this ſequeſtered ſpot, or whatever may have been your motive, you are welcome to what my cottage affords.—There is nought to pamper luxury; yet I can

I can offer you the temperate meal that will refreſh nature. I *ſaw* the deſtructive poliſh of your weapons through the caſement of my dwelling without diſmay, and *felt* the motive of your order for ſheathing them, as a mark of peace."

"It would ill accord with the character of a true Engliſhman," replied Rodolpho, "to intimidate a defenceleſs unoffending man.—My ſword," ſaid he, drawing it out of the ſcabbard, "ſtill retains its luſtre, nor ſhall it ever be tarniſhed by an act ſo incongrous with the genuine bravery of an Engliſhman. Chance directed my ſteps to your dwelling.—I am an Engliſh officer journeying to a diſtant camp, and according to the cuſtom of travellers in this

this land, I ſtopped at the ſkirts of the wood to refreſh myſelf and ſervants; invited by the harmony of the choriſters, and coolneſs of the deep ſhade, I ſtrolled on while my horſes were feeding, without any definable motive; enjoying the ſerenity of the ſcene, I became inſenſible of time or diſtance, 'till this plain burſting to my view, rouſed my feelings, and fixed them in wonder and curioſity; to which your appearance has added an intereſt more worthy and more lively than general events excite in my breaſt."

While Rodolpho was ſpeaking, the recluſe was engaged in placing on a little table ſome fruits, bread and butter, &c. He appeared evidently agitated during his

employ-

employment, every moment caſting anxious looks out of the back window of the cottage into the wood behind, and as ſoon as he had compleated his office of hoſpitality, without noticing what Rodolpho had ſaid, he haſtily left the room.

Our ſoldier was ſurpriſed at the ſingular demeanour of the ſolitary, and pauſed a few moments in hopes of his return. His manners had promiſed more courteſy. Ten minutes elapſed—all was ſtill; not a ſound, but the waving of the trees was heard. Rodolpho took a more minute view of the room he was in.

It was plain, and ſimply convenient, on a table by the front window, lay a ſmall ſilver thimble, a thread caſe, and a volume of Thompſon's Seaſons, open at the ſweet tale of Lavinia. Imagination now gave an intereſt to his feelings that made expectation painful. Fancy in a few minutes drew a faſcinating pourtrait of the female that reſided with the recluſe: Hope ſaid, ſhe muſt be young, innocent, and beautiful, or the tale would be unintereſting to her.

Rodolpho wearied himſelf with vain conjecture; the recluſe did not return; his men were wandering round the plain waiting his pleaſure, the ſun was al-

ready

ready beneath the horizon, but the ardency of his wiſhes to know more of the ſolitary abſorbed his reflections, and he forgot that a thick wood roſe between him and the road that led to the termination of his journey. He walked round the cottage endeavouring to find the path the recluſe took, when he left him, but in vain; it was impervious, and had he diſcovered it he would not have thought himſelf privileged to intrude.

"Perhaps he did not believe my intruſion accidental," thought Rodolpho, "and is fled, from the fear of perſecution. Alas! how little does he know me; but where

is his family? All is myſtery beyond the developement of conjecture."

Reluctantly our ſoldier retraced his path to the cottage, and on a ſlip of paper he wrote with his pencil,—"Lieutenant R—, leaves this cottage with ſentiments of gratitude to its owner, for the hoſpitality he has received, but with the *painful* apprehenſion that his motive has been miſtaken."

He placed the paper on the opened page of Thompſon, joined his men, and proceeded. When Rodolpho perceived the thick foliage of the trees, in ſome places, prevented the rays of the moon that was

now

now riſen, from lighting their ſteps, he condemned a curioſity that led any but himſelf into difficulty. He frankly told the men he had done wrong. They walked reſolutely on, ſtruggling with briars and thorns for ſometime, without perceiving they had wandered from the path they had entered the wood by; but as it ſtretched a conſiderable diſtance on the road ſide, they hoped to find their way out, and the ſituation they left the ſoldier and their horſes in would then eaſily be diſcovered.

It was now night, and the darkneſs was only interrupted by the watery light of the moon, moving through the clouds that enveloped the horizon, and ſometimes

times glimmering through the trees, exhibited their ſolitary path. Loud guſts of wind broke the ſilence of the hour, and at intervals the ſound of diſtant thunder, added to the drearineſs of the ſcene.

At length Rodolpho perceived the glimmering light of a lamp, or candle, through the trees. It immediately accrued to him, that they had diſcovered the retreat of the recluſe. He ſtood a few moments, debating if he ſhould endeavour to reach the place the light proceeded from, and aſk ſhelter from the ſtorm that momentarily increaſed; or brave its fury, and leave the ſolitary to his repoſe, for he was perſuaded it was him,

and

and was prevented from immediate determination by the fear of again driving him and his family from their abode; for it was evident all had fled at his approaching the cottage.

The flashes of lightening darted in quick succession; the thunder drew nearer, and the rain poured in torrents. The darkness in the short intervals of the flashes was frightfully visible, and as its pale gleams shone on the countenances of the men, they exhibited to Rodolpho the personification of terror; his stronger mind did not yield to the weakness of fear; but he was evidently anxious to get shelter for the men, whom he had involved in danger and difficulty. He

encouraged them to follow him, and force their way through the thick underwood; for they could diſcover no *path* that led to the light. They were preparing to make an attempt, when their attention was arreſted by ſoft and ſweet muſic, that ſeemed to float in the air as the wind died away, and as it again ſwelled, it ſeemed to ſwell with it, till its harmony was loſt in the awful combination of thunder and wind.

Rodolpho with extreme amazement ſtood liſtening; he could not immediately determine what inſtrument it was he heard; but was convinced its harmony was increaſed by a female voice. The awfulneſs of the ſcene had before impreſ-

ſed

ied his mind, and his ſilent aſpirations had been directed to *him* who was riding on the wings of the wind, when the interpoſition of ſoft ſounds touched the fineſt vibrations of his harmonious ſoul, and lifted it for a moment beyond this ſublunary ſcene. Again the wind ſunk, the tones of harmony floated in the air, and were again loſt in the ſtorm.

The men remained fixed to the ſpot, nor either breathed a ſound. *Terror* had rendered them mute; their feeble minds were now alive only to ſuperſtition, and each was impreſſed with the idea that ſomething ſupernatural dwelt in the wood, and as it ſeemed by ſinging to rejoice at the tempeſt without, they conſidered it a

malevolent ſpirit, and were anxiouſly hoping their leader would retreat *from*, inſtead of approach the ſhelter the light promiſed, and which was before the object of their wiſhes.

It would not be an unintereſting ſubject for the curious, in the noble microcoſm of the human mind, to inveſtigate why the man whoſe life has been an evidence of courage, in whoſe breaſt the flame of valour has burnt with the moſt lufrous brightneſs, ſhould feel his ſoul contract, his frame agitated by an involuntary horror, and his whole ſelf dwindle into the trembling coward, at a ſound he cannot account for; a fleeting form whoſe rapid motion eludes his full view; or

or ſometimes even the ignus fatuus, that deceptive terror on ancient record: but there are many movements in the mind of man, whoſe ſpring the philoſopher may have diſcovered, though he does not declare them, becauſe they would exhibit mortifying aſſurances of his weakneſs, and lower the proud ſtandard *he* has erected.

The courage of the men now with Rodolpho had been tried; they had ſtood the bayonet's point, and the bullet's courſe without ſhrinking, and yet they were appalled in the ſituation ſpoken of. Perhaps ſome whom chance may direct to open theſe pages, will exclaim againſt my

uneducated proof of weakneſs; for we often compliment the higher orders of ſociety with too much injuſtice, at the expence of the lower. *Courage*, nay *fortitude*, the quality of ſuperior minds, may be the reigning paſſions in the breaſt of a beggar as well as a prince, and wherever they are, their energies will be the ſame.

One of the men, whoſe terror rendered mute every other feeling, beſought Rodolpho to retire into any other part of the foreſt; that he had rather ſtand a *hundred* tempeſts, or any thing except being *ſhot* for deſertion, (for then a man can never expect to go to heaven), than remain within the ſound of the voice of the

the devil, whom he knew could take any form to deſtroy.

Our ſoldier was rouſed from the pauſe of mind, that ſuſpended his faculties, by the intreaty of the ſoldier; but as he was endeavouring to reaſſume his ſpirits; the voice unaccompanied by any inſtrument, in the ſweeteſt tone ſang the following *Sonnet*.

SONNET TO HUMANITY.

Humanity, thou parent of the tear and tender ſigh,
That beats from virtue's breaſt, that loves to ſooth
The wretched orphan in its time of need,
Caſt on the world's bleak waſte, no friend or pa-
rent nigh.

Thy power pervades the grated dungeon dark,
Where thrall'd and wretched on his bed of ſtraw,
The priſ'ner ſcarce his feverish breath can draw,
Whilſt to his aching ears ten thouſand fetters clank.

Thine is the voice of heaven, that ſounds ſo ſweet,
Which love celeſtial ſpeaks to man below,
In ſoft and melting tones to ſooth his woe,
To mitigate the heart's tumultuous beat.
Ah! what is grandeur to ſuch pride as thine
Ambition, avarice, ſhrink and bend beneath thy
ſhrine.

The

The full notes of wild harmony, that were evidently confined to no rules, in which this imperfect but feeling ſonnet was ſung, for ſome moments, entranced Rodolpho; he was reluctant to move, and though he did not imagine he was in an enchanted foreſt, or to encounter a ſupernatural being; yet, he vaulted into the regions of romance, and dreſſed up in his imagination a *mortal* goddeſs, whom he was now impelled by an irreſiſtable impulſe to endeavour at ſeeing.

The ſtorm, while the ſonnet was ſinging, had gradually decreaſed; the moon emerged from the clouds, that paſſed in rapid ſucceſſion, and diſcovered to the

wanderers

wanderers a path that appeared by its direction to lead to the light.

Rodolpho endeavoured to quiet the fears of the moſt timid of the men, and proceeded. In a few minutes they came to the cottage, from which the light glimmered. Immediately Rodolpho ſaid aloud; "ſome travellers who have loſt their way—appeal to the *humanity* of the being who ſang its delights, for an hour's ſhelter, till morning will enable them to retrace their path out of the *wood*."

The moon ſhone brightly on the caſements of the cot, and they perceived an old negro woman looking out of the window,

dow, who aſked, "who they were?"—"Strangers in diſtreſs," replied Rodolpho. Immediately a voice from within ſaid, "lay a faggot on the fire." And the next moment the door opened; and the ſame perſon Rodolpho ſaw in the morning appeared with a lamp in his hand.

Rodolpho repeated his requeſt. "I opened the door for you," replied the recluſe, "ceremony is unneceſſary in a wilderneſs,—troubleſome in a palace."—And he led the way to a room that our ſoldier perceived was the ſame in which the recluſe had left him in the morning, and that he had now entered by the back way.

The

The two men did not follow their leader, the appearance of the ſtranger impreſſed their minds with apprehenſion; the ſettled gloom on his countenance as the lamp gleamed on it, they conſtrued into malevolence.

The recluſe placed Rodolpho a ſeat, and ſtirred the fire into a blaze; but his ſilent manners repelled familiarity.—"My attendants are wet and weary, will you allow me to call them in?" ſaid our ſoldier, after a minute's pauſe of *wonder*.

"*Yes*," ſaid the recluſe, and again ſtirred the fire; it ſeemed a well-timed ſignal of welcome.

When

When the men entered, he opened the door of an inner apartment, in which was *another* wood fire, and pointed with his hand for the men to go to it. He then called aloud "Faithful." An old negro appeared. "The travellers are wet and weary," said the recluse. The woman disappeared, and soon returned with a change of dress, which she first placed before Rodolpho; and then carried the remainder to the two men, without uttering a syllable.

The gloomy reserve of the recluse, and the silence of his servant puzzled Rodolpho, and restrained within painful bounds the acknowledgments that were due for the

the comforts he enjoyed, and repelled every advance to familiarity.

There is no self denial so painful to a mind of genuine sensibility, as that felt from restraining the effusions of gratitude; every expression that flows from that sublimated source dissipates the oppressive idea of obligation, and gives us back that independence of mind, so dear to the heart of man.

Would those favoured beings, whose felicitous dispositions prompt to deeds of benevolence, for a moment suppose themselves in the situation of the obliged, they would feel that their *endurance* of grateful

ful expreſſion, from the being they have benefited, confers a more refined obligation, by indulging a ſweet and ſoothing emotion, than even the deed that excited the firſt ſenſation of thankfulneſs.

Reſtraint of expreſſion was as painful to Rodolpho, as a heart awake to thankfulneſs can imagine; but he entered into the humour of his hoſt, changed his apparel in ſilence, and with a look of thankfulneſs only, acknowledged the kindneſs.

The men for ſome time gaped with wonder at the ſilence of the recluſe, and the negro; *then* debated in whiſper if they ſhould either change their apparel, or refreſh

refresh themselves with the offered repast. The most timid of the two declared his opinion to his companion, that the old negro was an imp of *darkness*, and the solitary her familiar; therefore the provision and cloaths *must* be poisonous to good Christians, for whom those sort of beings had a peculiar hatred. He immediately began to relate a dismal tale of an old witch, whose appearance and actions he contrived should resemble the old negro, till at the end he worked up his imagination to the full stretch of fear; his limbs trembled; his courage left him; and to look round the room that was enlivened only by the blaze of a wood fire, was an effort beyond his resolution.

It is among the inexplicables, why a mind much more enlightened than this man's, attending to the deſcription of images, that thrill the ſoul with horror, ſhould ſolicit a continuance of ſuch ſenſations; but ſo it is; for we may obſerve whenever a tale of horror has been related by one in a party, that every other member in his turn, will rummage his memory for ſome incident, if poſſible, ſtill more terrific, and when reminiſcence can furniſh no more, he feels diſſatisfied, and had rather ruminate in ſilence on events out of the order of nature, than make an effort to free himſelf from prejudices, (that contract the mind,) by rational inveſtigation.

Rodolpho's ſervant, whoſe mind was not ſo much the ſlave of ſuperſtition as the ſoldier's, obſerved, through the half-opened door, that his maſter had changed his dreſs, and was partaking of the refreſhment on the table;—this drove the tale of his companion from his mind, and with his perſuaſion, aided by the chearing warmth of the fire, the ſoldier followed his example, and changed his cloaths; comfort animated his ſpirits, ſuperſtition weakened, and with ſharpened appetites they eat the offered repaſt, and ſoon loſt their fears and fatigue in ſleep, round the fire, which the negro ſupplied with freſh fuel as often as it needed.

The

The mind of Rodolpho was too much engaged to ſleep; the repulſive manner of the ſolitary, while he performed ſuch acts of kindneſs, was an inconſiſtency that engaged his reflections: fear never impels a generous mind to cordiality, thought our ſoldier; his countenance was unmoved at the ſight of us, our bayonets, our muſkets; his authoritative tone and frigid look had nothing in it that implied diſmay; his conduct ſeems more the reſult of deſperation; he has fled ſociety; he is perhaps diſguſted with his ſpecies; life is not the object of his care; to take it from him would only rid him of what he values not: he has therefore given way to the urbanity of his nature, which events may have rendered obſcure, tho' not eradicated, and relieves thoſe whom

chaſed may caſt within his influence regardleſs of the event.

Theſe reflections ſerved only to irritate the curioſity of Rodolpho; he longed to ſee the female whoſe harmonious voice gave harmony to the tempeſt, and created ſuch an intereſt in his feelings; to hear why a man whoſe addreſs and appearance betrayed natural politeneſs had choſen ſo compleat a retirement abſtracted from ſociety: yet he could not reſolve to commence a converſation with his hoſt by aſking queſtions; it would be breaking a ſocial law which directs us, as far as our powers will admit, to return the kindneſs we receive; and to ſome characters, a compliance with their humour is the moſt acceptable

ceptable return we can offer. We are more flattered by an allowance for our failings, than by applauſe for our virtues.

Rodolpho conſidered the determined taciturnity of the recluſe indicative of his humour, and remained ſilent, often looking at him who kept his eyes fixed on the fire, except when he caſt a momentary glance at our ſoldier:—his head was uncovered, his countenance had an expreſſion of ſternneſs, that ſeemed leſs the effect of nature than events; for ſometimes his contracted brow would relax, his features expand to an appearance of candour, and then a ſigh, indicative of ſorrow, would heave his breaſt.

They had ſat a conſiderable time ſilent; Rodolpho took out his watch;—"It is *nine* o'clock," ſaid he; the exclamation was involuntary, the recluſe ſtarted, and caſt his eyes on our ſoldier; their eyes met—there was ſomething ſo ſorrowful and impreſſive in thoſe of the ſolitary, that diſſolved the quick ſuſceptibility of Rodolpho into a tear; the recluſe kept his eye fixed on it as it fell on the watch.

The contending feelings that paſſed in rapid ſucceſſion through his countenace, and which ſeemed, by his heaving breaſt, to be labouring for utterance—the overflowing ſenſibility which appeared in that of Rodolpho—the ſilence of the ſcene that was only interrupted by the ruſtling of the branches

branches of the trees that ſurrounded the cottage, raiſed the feelings of Rodolpho to their full compaſs.

The recluſe was evidently agitated, ſome tears fell, and he appeared to be on the point of giving freedom to his labouring breaſt, when a voice, that, to the ears of Rodolpho, gave an idea of ſeraphic ſweetneſs and affection, exclaimed, "My dear uncle, what is the matter? why do you weep?" and inſtantly the form of a female, light as a Goſſamor, ſprung acroſs the room, fell on his neck, breathing reſponſive ſighs.

Rodolpho roſe from his ſeat, and made an involuntary exclamation of ſurpriſe;

but a moment's reflection told him, to intrude by enquiry, or to attempt consolation, would not be an act of kindness.

The soul whose sensibilities have been long suppressed, feels a sensation of extreme relief, when nature meliorates the nerves that were become rigid; he sat down in silence viewing the female, who, in soft whispers, was comforting the recluse:—during her tender attentions, he often kissed and pressed her to his bosom.

The intellect of Rodolphe was lodged in his eye and ear. The female, while soothing her uncle, did not notice him; but she exhibited a face and form calculated to warm the frigid breast of an anchorite.

To

To nature she owed all; her dress was in the simple style of a peasant, distinguished only by a peculiar neatness—her hair flowed in all the luxuriance of nature; her employment gave an interest to her figure sensibly felt by Rodolphe.

Is there in nature a contemplation more enchanting to the mind, that can appreciate the sweet, the tender cordialities of life, than youth consoling the afflicted? What a magic influence does it cast o'er the character of a female, when we view her smoothing the pillar of age or sickness, or endeavouring to cheer the desponding mind with the bright colours of youthful hope; the consolations of young and uncorrupted hearts have an harmony all their

own

own to the ear of age. Nature ſpeaks in their voice, chears and gently ſlopes their paſſage to the grave. And believe me, fair ones, to the eye of virtue it adorns you more than the gayeſt habit, and will yield more exquiſite delight on reflection, when the parent, the friend, or the ſtranger is departed, than the moſt refined ſcene of ſenſual enjoyment.

The recluſe gently diſengaged himſelf from the embrace of the young woman, and ſaid, "Antonia, take a chair and ſit near me;"—Rodolpho made an effort to place a ſeat, but her light and rapid movement anteceded his; ſhe obſerved it, and, ſmiling, acknowledged the *kindneſs* of his intention—ſhe ſcarcely knew the meaning

of

of the word '*polite*,' that ſlides ſo ſmoothly off the tongue of poliſhed females, without ſpringing from the heart. Untutored nature ſpoke in her voice, whoſe *politeneſs* is a diſpoſition to be *pleaſed* and *pleaſe*.

The ſolitary recovered his ſcattered ſpirits, and fixing his eyes (that had loſt all the ſternneſs which before animated them) on our ſoldier, thus addreſſed him—

"The reſerve of my manner, that ill accords with the hoſpitality due to a ſtranger, may have impreſſed you with an unfavourable idea of my heart, and the agitation of ſpirits you have witneſſed, given an appearance of weakneſs to my mind, that the frigid philoſopher affects to deſpiſe."

"While

"While in the enjoyment of the comforts you have dispensed to me, a stranger," replied Rodolpho, "I should not merit their experience, if I felt any other sentiment than gratitude.—I am a stranger, a barrier to your judging unfavourably of me, and the same barrier prevents my thinking of the agitation I have witnessed (the cause of which I am ignorant), with any other feeling than regret, fearing its removal may be beyond my power."

"It is," replied the recluse, "my language (vanity is dead in my heart) is not, I feel, in union with the rustic simplicity of my dwelling and appearance; all to you seems enveloped in mystery; a mystery, that it may be your duty as a soldier,

in

in theſe times of bloody warfare, to unfold, when every man that is unarmed, is eſteemed an enemy to the country to which he belongs.—I am of *no* country; I *was* a citizen of the world, I am now a being, whoſe boundary is a deſert: the recluſe paused, memory ſeemed to have no pleaſures for him.

Rodolpho was ſilent; every ſentiment he could have uttered would have ſeemed cold and intruſive. Antonia ſpoke not, but the mantling bluſh of her cheek, the tenderneſs of her eye, that floated in liquid amber, told her participation in the feelings of her *uncle*.

Fifteen years only had Antonia been a being of this world, freſh and blooming as the roſe of the wilderneſs where ſhe grew was her countenance; pure as the lily of the valley was her mind; nature was all alive in her heart; vivacious and tender; with the lark ſhe offered her morning oraiſons to the God of day, and chaunted with the lonely Philomel her evening thanks to the ſame beneficent being; after that her moſt lively ſenſation was love for her uncle; her form and manner perſonified the idea of an Arcadian, beautiful and artleſs.

The utopia of her uncle's cottage formed her ideas of the world; ſhe knew not what ſorrow was; ſhe wept when her uncle

uncle looked ſad; but this ſympathy of nature, this melting tenderneſs was a luxury not unpleaſing to her, and by compariſon gave a vivacity to her more pleaſurable feelings. She ſeized with ſurpriſing avidity the knowledge her uncle imparted; her fancy was chaſte and ſportive, which rendered her infinitely amuſing: no factitious reſtraint prevented her ſaying all that occurred to her mind.

She had a natural correctneſs of thought on thoſe ſubjects within her knowledge that appeared to flow ſpontaneouſly from truth, and which ſhe expreſſed in a way that prevented your wiſhing an idea or expreſſion changed, for fear they ſhould be leſs juſt, or leſs pleaſing: the uncorrupted

mind

mind has a natural promptitude to juſt deciſion, when unchained by thoſe rules which art has forged. Antonia knew none.

Rodolpho, during the ſilence of the ſolitary, contemplated her countenance with a lively intereſt; the ſingularity of his meeting her, that was tinged with the glowing colour of romance; the beauty of the fair one, the language and manner of the recluſe, impreſſed his mind with ſenſations to which he could give no name; he wiſhed to hear more, that he might be at liberty to ſpeak; he feared the morn would arrive 'ere he had heard all; he longed to ſpeak of the melody that harmoniſed his ſoul, while in danger of effects

fects from the rage of the elements, but he could not intrude a question or an observation; the look of the recluse was mournful; Antonia was silent. In a few minutes she rose to put fresh fuel to the fire.

Rodolpho rose; "let me assist you," said he; "It is a pleasure to me, I thank you," returned Antonia, "I always mend the fire, my uncle says it burns more cheerfully:" it blazed brightly, as if to confirm the opinion: its light roused the recluse.

Again, he addressed Rodolpho: "Your countenance has revived feelings in their full force, that I have been seven years

trying to *subdue*; there is I am convinced, a subtle attraction in some men, that impells them with irresistible force to regard each other; this morn I was sensible of that attraction to you; why may there not be an arcana in human feeling beyond the power of human solution, for we were absolute strangers.

"My departure this morning was abrupt and uncivil, in return for that urbanity you displayed, and by being unexpected was forcibly felt, and deeply impressed on my mind.

"Antonia first discovered the glitter of your fixed bayonets; 'twas a new object to her sight; but she had read of the cala-

mities

nities of war, and her untutored mind ſtarted at the idea of its being realiſed in the perſon of her uncle. Affrighted, ſhe anxiouſly beſought me to fly; I did not; but prevailed on her and the negro ſervant to retire to a ſmall receſs we have formed in the wood, the approach to which eludes a ſtrangers obſervation. I met you, and the anxiety of my looks, which muſt have been evident, were occaſioned by ſeeing Antonia through the foliage of the trees in extreme anxiety and apprehenſion; her fears for my ſafety were too lively to be reſtrained, and I was too apprehenſive that myſtery might ſully her name, who muſt one day enter a world I had left, to allow her appearing; I quitted you, quieted her fears, and returned to the cottage.

You were departed, I was disappointed; the few lines you left, exhibited, I conceived, the man of feeling; hurt at being mistaken, I wished for an opportunity of undeceiving you without the hope of obtaining one; chance has afforded it me.

"Your meeting me in this wood must have excited your curiosity; it has been evident, it awakened your sensibility.—There is room for unfavourable conclusions; every man of genuine integrity owes it to himself to withdraw the veil of mystery, when in his power, that events may have cast o'er his name; and this helpless orphan's claims are still stronger and more tender: she may suffer from being my companion, tho' withdrawn from the society of *man*.

Experience

"Experience *first* taught me his capabilities, while ſilent I was endeavouring to arrange events that are deeply impreſſed, and will *never* be forgotten. I attempted it, but the mind is not always ſufficiently ſelf-poſſeſſed to endure a clear and connected reminiſcence of the paſt; we muſt pauſe to collect fortitude. With the riſing of the ſun you will quit me; but I firſt wiſh, if I have your leave, to unfold circumſtances, that will explain why myſelf and this dear girl have withdrawn from ſociety. Once my breaſt roſe to meet and ameliorate the ſorrows of man.

"I have every reaſon," ſaid Rodolpho, to conclude the ſame fellow feeling ſtill prompts your actions; all I ſee excites my

wonder; all I hear my admiration; and I regret, that a man formed for ſociety, ſhould hide qualities, that might be uſeful and adorn it, in a wilderneſs."

"It is poſſible," returned the recluſe, "that before I conclude my brief hiſtory, you will ſhut your heart againſt me. Buſy, reſtleſs *man*, makes little allowance for the *man* of feeling, tho' his errors often originate in his virtues."

"I am ſincerely diſpoſed to hear with the deepeſt intereſt—I frankly own I have the moſt lively wiſh, and your hint of accounting for what I ſee was very grateful to my heart," ſaid Rodolpho, "I feel the attraction you

flattered

flattered me with; the night is not far ſpent, let me not depart uninformed to whom I am ſo much indebted."

Rodolpho looked at the recluſe, who made an inclination of his head, and thus addreſſed Antonia——

"You are going to hear of a world of which you know but little, and that by report only: to have diſſolved the ſweet conceptions of innocence before it was *really* neceſſary, would have been cruel.

"In theſe ſhades, you have felt the ſweets of native virtue, and I truſts its influence will be immutable. The impulſes of uncorrupted nature are confirmed by habit,

and will become more dear to you, when compared to actions as opposite in their nature, as destructive in their consequences, and which the world presents to the view of inexperienced innocence, when they are cast into its absorbing vortex. Then, Antonia, you will feel the value of that virtue so dear to the human heart, that, when her *form* forsakes us we pursue her *shadow*. Vice will not require the force of language to render it odious in your eyes, and incongruous to your feelings.

"Your danger, my dear Antonia, will arise from the amiable credulity of inexperienced virtue. It is the specious, the fugitive, you must be taught to dread. How is that knowledge to be imparted without contracting the heart, and dissolving

ſolving the charm of innocence by infuſing ſuſpicion! But it muſt be; as the world is at preſent conſtituted, ſafety only is in caution, in ſuſpicion; the latter was a gueſt in my early days I would not admit, and my peace was a martyr to the lacerating experience of deception, that has driven me (to avoid its repetition) to this wilderneſs for ſhelter.

"Your tenderneſs, your felicitous diſpoſitions that have ſeized with fervour whatever I have addreſſed to your taſte and fancy, your voice, which is modulated to my heart, has, while it charmed and ſoothed me, awoke fears for your future fate beyond the power of my philoſophy to quell."

"Do

"Do not grieve for me, my dear uncle," replied Antonia, "the God you have taught me to love and worſhip, and whoſe power and kindneſs every leaf that trembles at the breeze, as well as every ſtar which glitters in the firmament, makes manifeſt he will be my guardian, when it pleaſes him to remove you to the world of glory you have taught me to aſpire after. I will treaſure your counſel in my heart. I will love the good, and pity the erring; and he will be my guardian and protector."

She preſſed her uncle's hand to her heart, looked chearfully in his face,—he returned the preſſure, and a ſmile for a moment animated his features.

Rodolpho

Rodolpho was ſilent, but his mind had ample food for obſervation and feeling. His paſſions were not "kindled by the lightening of a glance, or warmed by the full aſſemblage of beautiful features *only*; but the alliciency of beauty, the melting tenderneſs of a heart pure in its laſt receſſes," gently ſlided into his; and during the pauſe the recluſe made, his heart whiſpered, what an exquiſite pleaſure it would be to lead ſuch a creature as Antonia through the world! And 'God abandoned' muſt that man be, who would wiſh to ſpot ſo fair an impreſſion of *his* works.

The recluſe continued, "in this ſolitude I have habituated my mind to the ſelfiſh philoſophy that infuſes ſtubborneſs

neſs, while the fortitude that gives patience has eluded my graſp. Conſuming in this ſolitary grove ſeven years; I've been *reaſoning*, but I could not, as I hoped, forget, for one moment to feel—I ſtrove againſt nature; the unnatural combat has nearly exhauſted my frame, without relieving my heart.

"Your appearance and manner have rouſed my long dormant philanthrophy; my mind ſeems recovering a degree of elaſticity; its contractions expand; its affections renew; but it is too late—I wander.

"I entered on the great theatre of the world ſubject to no controul; poſſeſſed of

of a fortune adequate to the demands of rational elegance. When circumſtances firſt made me independant, I took a view of myſelf as a mortal; conſcience held up the clear mirror of reflection; it exhibited a liberal mind, and a heart frank and benevolent.

"I never felt the tender preſſure of maternal arms, nor knew a father's love; they were both tranſlated to a *better* region ere I knew how to eſtimate *this*. An uncle on my mother's ſide ſupplied their place. Whatever may be the delights of filial love and duty, they cannot be more exquiſite than thoſe I felt for him from the moment I knew their ſource, till I loſt him in death. He *was* an honour to his

ſpecies

species, but he knew little of them. His own heart was the ſtandard by which he judged others. He loved retirement. It yielded the rational pleaſures he delighted in. He called the aged, the neceſſitous round him, cheered their hearts with kindneſs, and ſent them away bleſſing him; which was the anodyne that lulled his ſenſes to peaceful ſlumber.

There was a decided *ſingularity* attended his benevolence; it was *never* chilled by ingratitude; for a great many years he had not viſited a populous town, perhaps that accounts for it; and if the experience of *early* years had checked it, the impreſſion was erazed by the more fortunate concurrence of events in maturer life. It

is the attribute of benevolent minds to lose sight of past injury, in the enjoyment of imparting present good to those, who are of a more felicitous cast of heart.

"His observations characterised his feelings; we naturally imbibe the habits and opinions of those we live with and regard. My flexible mind yielded to his, and received them as sacred truths. Integrity and benevolence were inmates nature gave me; these are principles inherent in man, and in the first stages of life, even in our infantine sports they are often visible, and want little cultivation to operate for the good of others.—Feeling them, and seeing their effects in the actions of my uncle, accustomed only to the society of a few

select

ſelect friends, I contracted habits and opinions fit only for a being of the golden age of the poets.

"At twenty-three my heart was a pupil of nature's; at that period I loſt my uncle! He *died*, and his name needed not the engravers *art* to perpetuate it. It was engraven on the *hearts* of the poor, the widows, the orphans, and their ſighs for his loſs wafted his ſoul to the boſom of his God.

"He left me rich beyond my wants. As ſoon after his death as the unaffected ſorrow I felt was weakened by the reflection of his preſent bliſs, (for in the firſt moments of anguiſh, at the loſs of a beloved friend,

friend, we feel only for ourselves.) I quitted the village where we dwelt, and entered on what is called the *world*.

"I was in the zenith of fortune's favour. Every man I met pressed my hand, and smiled in my face; every woman received me flatteringly. I can conceive no greater happiness than I experienced while under this deception.—Would that it never had been dissolved! Credulity is the failing of inexperienced youth; and I went onward.

"There is in the uncorrupted mind, however ample its general philanthropy, an insufficiency of happiness, till it has selected some being on whom to bestow

thoſe fine touches of tenderneſs, that pure æther of the paſſions—I mean *friendſhip*. I looked around me for a *friend*—rank, or ſituation I thought not of; and, perhaps, the idea of being ſerviceable to the man I might ſelect, gave a deeper intereſt to my wiſhes.

Amidſt the circle I joined, ſoon after I emerged from the happy ignorance of ſolitude, was a man whoſe mind ſeemed the repoſitory of knowledge, and his heart the ſanctuary of virtue. His manners were unobtruſive, but engaging; he appeared to ſhrink from, rather than ſeek opportunities of exhibiting his ſuperiority of knowledge; he would firſt utter a few ſhort ſentences, and thoſe ſo choice in expreſſion,

preſſion, ſo appoſite to the ſubject ſpoken of, *that* by *general* conſent he was ſolicited to ſay more; ſtill he had a diffidence of manner, that while it appeared to yield, was forcibly attracting you to his ſide of the argument. He *ſeemed* to have preſerved that fearleſs independence of opinion that gives luſtre to character.

"He argued with firmneſs, but without irritation of temper; heard with calmneſs the inflated declamation of his oppoſer, and while he was endeavouring to confound and beguile by language, *Biphron* was collecting the plain dictates of reaſon, which bring irrefragable conviction; his judgment ſeemed never the dupe of his ear. The fineſſe of character he poſſeſſed,

is diſtructive to the happineſs of ſociety wherever it obtains admiſſion, and it requires a long knowledge of the world to detect it.

"I was a novice; he diſtinguiſhed me by that affectionate and manly politeneſs, that is acceptable to the ſenſitive mind. I took him to my boſom, devoted to him the nobleſt action of my ſoul; he became, as it were, incorporated with my exiſtence! I felt no intereſt in a good he did not participate; I was inſenſible to ſorrow when I had his ſympathy—I repeat, I took him to my *heart*, and like the baneful tree of the Aſiatic foreſt, whoſe boughs are covered with roſes, but whoſe deleterious dews, while they ſparkle on it,

blaſt

blaſt the earth that receives them—he blaſted my happineſs."

The recluſe became evidently agitated. *Memory*—too correct memory, by exciting oppoſing feelings, was the harbinger of miſery.

He continued, " my heart was formed to endure the extremes of human feeling; to experience the full force of every tender emotion that viſits the heart of *man*. Friendſhip, love, like the burning glaſs that collects all the rays of the ſun to one focus, attracted every ray of mental radiance that could light me to happineſs under their influence; and while I thought theſe chaſte, but rare poſſeſ-

ſions mine, my natural benevolence increaſed! So much in harmony were my feelings, they extended to the whole creation, from the emmit of the field to the great leviathan of the deep.

"Nothing in this life purifies and animates the heart of man more to the exerciſe of thoſe virtues, which renders him the connecting link with angels, than *pure* friendſhip for *man*, and love for woman. But O, man! thou complex being, on what frugile foundation do thy hopes of happineſs repoſe, when thou erecteſt them on the friendſhip of thy ſpecies."

Again the recluſe pauſed; Antonia and Rodolpho were ſilent. *His* rapid delive-

ry—

ry—*his* ardent language, with the evident agitation of his mind, ſeemed to aſk reſt. In a ſhort time he proceeded.

" You have the endurance of benevolence, to hear the complainings of a diſguſted man, who amidſt his loudeſt murmurings againſt his ſpecies, is diſſatisfied with himſelf—lacerating experience!

" I'll be brief, and advert to the moſt eventful period of my life.—A period when I ſaw every hope of happineſs drop from me, like the leaves of a tree that the poiſonous blaſt has withered.

" To the warm enthuſiaſm of my heart was now added a new motive. I *loved*,

(O! how ſincerely), Almeria, nature's favourite child, an orphan, caſt on the world's wide waſte. Her mother died giving her birth; her father experienced the fluctuation of fortune, that ſeems the inheritance of *man*. The concourſe of events gave me an opportunity of being uſeful to him; while my mind was engaged in arranging his concerns, my heart became a *victim* to his daughter's beauty and artleſſneſs. O! nature, why didſt thou ſuffer deception to enter ſo fair a temple? He died ſoon after I was known to Almeria, ſhe was then deſtitute, unfriended. I became the guardian of her honour.—I made known my paſſion.—I thought I ſaw in the timid look, and

mantling

mantlin bluſh, reciprocal feelings. My felicity roſe with my hopes.

"I introduced my friend; he admired Almeria, but his conduct was ſo circumſpect, that I accuſed him of frigidity, and wondered he could bound his admiration.

"Suſpicion never entered my heart. Love, friendſhip, competence in poſſeſſion, the 'celeſtial plant' happineſs, had taken root in my heart, and was promiſing a luxuriant bloſſom, when my *friend* plucked it up by the root, and precipitated me from the plenitude of hope to the depths of deſpair. He *robbed* me of my love; he *robbed* me of himſelf, my *friend*. In proportion to the happineſs I had

had enjoyed, and the expectation of that yet untasted, I became miserable; for the quicker our enjoyments, the more acute our regrets at their loss, and in proportion to the confidence inexperience places in the friendship of man, is its disgust at deception.

The wound my *friend* gave was doubled; it was the extinction of *hope*, which is the support of the human mind, as gravity is that of the universe: at the removal of either, confusion and disorder follow. All appeared within me buried in obliquity; a vacancy of soul, more intolerable than the bittereſt reflection; the world was stripped of its delights; nothing remained for me; my soul was wounded

wounded in the two points in which it was moſt alive. I loſt that elevating paſſion for man (the ephemeron of an hour) I could not bear to look round me through an extended circle, and ſee no eye beam affection—no breaſt dilate with ſympathy. When my ſoul recovered a degree of action, I reſolved to follow him even to another climate where he had flown, to demand of him my friend, my miſtreſs.

At the next moment, my heart ſwelled with agony at the bare idea of ſeeing him; then I reſolved on ſeeking the ſatisfaction due to what is termed *honour*; but this was only the impulſe of momentary delerium: my heart ſhrunk from the poſſibility

lity of increaſing his errors by murder, or fixing crime on myſelf by the ſame act.

At length, the tumult of my mind ſunk into the quietude of deſpair. "Man no more delights me, nor woman ſoothes me," ſaid I; "I will ſteal away from humanity."

"I concentrated my concerns, and returned to the ſpot where I had contemplated nought of man but his virtues; to the village where my uncle lived. My own houſe was inhabited—I went to that of my tenants. A few days only convinced me of how much importance the conduct of the higher circles of ſociety is to the character of the lower.

Four

Four years had effected a total change; the great man of the village was a man of the *world*—a *man* of faſhion—a mutable being, as variable as the mock-deity he worſhipped—ſurrounded by oſtentatious ſplendour, and followed by a ſwarm of paraſites, whom Dr. Johnſon defines to be "thoſe who frequent rich tables, and earn their welcome by flattery." his attendants, apeing the graces and vices of their maſters, inſinuated the contagion of luxury, and its baneful conſequences, into the hearts of the viliagers, and with their innocence robbed them of their happineſs.

The village church, that uſed to gratify the good heart with the ſight of humble piety, arrayed in the modeſt garb of neatneſs,

neatneſs, now exhibited reſtleſs countenances, wandering eyes and confident demeanor, dreſſed in the caſt off frippery of abigails.

The virgin, whoſe cheek the bluſh of modeſty uſed to colour, on being addreſſed, now ſtared *boldly* in my face, and ſeemed *ready* to lure me with the voice of a wanton. Health with innocence had taken their flight from the village—luxury, vice, and diſeaſe, uſurped their place.

"O ye great ones!" ſaid I, "like a frightful precipice, that lifts its head to the clouds, then falls and deſolates the plain that ſupports it—you with your vices and your wealth render, deſolate, minds

once

once the abode of innocence and happineſs, and whoſe purſuits are the foundation of your enjoyments.

I grow prolix; the garrulity of an egotiſt is tireſome—ſorrow makes man ſelfiſh; he ſeeks participation to meliorate his own feelings, and forgets he is clouding the mind of the happy: I have related the cauſe of my diſguſt; I will ſtop, nor further oppreſs your kindneſs—the ſun of fortune, perhaps, ſhines on your ſcene, why ſhould I for a moment cloud it, becauſe it ſets in *tears* on mine."

"I intreat you to continue," ſaid Rodolpho, "I have not interrupted you; comment would have been intruſive: a mind

ſo

ſo ſenſitive as yours, muſt have endured much; and however the ſtern philoſopher may *condemn*, the candid mind will allow for infirmities derived from exceſs of feeling; and while they lament, will hope the native elaſticity of the ſoul will reſuſcitate and extend to thoſe noble purpoſes for which it was given."

"It is too late," ſaid the recluſe.

"We will not anticipate," returned Rodolpho; "and if the remainder of your intereſting relation will not be too oppreſſive, I intreat you to continue."

"It's a relief," replied the ſolitary.

"This

"This living picture made me loath my ſpecies as much as I before valued them:—theſe flutterers; theſe beings of fashion's hour, ſought my ſociety—I was rich—a ſufficient motive. They learnt why—I eſtranged myſelf from ſociety—that the preſent habits of my mind modified the lines of my countenance, and had the inhumanity to offer common place conſolation to my tortured mind, even while their manners were increaſing the evil.

"I heard them in ſilence; I ſhould have replied in a language they did not underſtand, and prolonged the *evil* of their converſation.

"When they perceived I was not to be drawn into their circle, with their importunities, and ill-timed conſolation, they retired, and ſoon, in the midſt of the crowd, I ſtood alone; like the lonely Paria, I was of a proſcribed race; forlorn and deſerted by the univerſe; no living being took intereſt in my exiſtence; *none* would bear with the murmurs of diſappointment; none tried to ſooth the ſorrows of an oppreſſed heart, tho' all were ready to cenſure, by announcing my error.

"This experience deſtroyed the equilibrium of my ſoul, and hurried me into an exceſs of opinion oppoſite to that which had been the ſource of my paſt delights,

and

and reſentment againſt man comprehenſively entered into my feelings."

"This diſtinct, this elevated race, of which I am a member, no longer, ſaid I, regards his equal than he adminiſters to his pleaſures; while he can bring his quota to the general mart of hilarity; while his breaſt is dilated with the power of communicating mirth, he is acceptable, but no longer; the being whom the preſſure of misfortune and oppreſſion has made lowly; and him whom a *too* quick ſenſibility has rendered miſerable, have only his contempt.

"Man unjuſtly ridicules ſenſations he never felt; and is this the deſtiny of the man of

ing? *Yes*; his voice is in harmony with no ear but his own; it is unheeded, and his convictions lead him only to sequestration; I will retire to the deep recess of the wood; its gloom will be more in unison with my feelings; its stillness will calm my pertubations," said I, "my sole comfort, shall be the contemplation of nature, and with that contemplation I'll be satisfied.

"One moment I resolved, the next I acted; I sought this spot, the walls of the cottage had been erected for a woodman; at the commencement of the war it was deserted; I made it simply convenient as you see; the fancy that surrounds it has been

been the performance of Antonia; ſhe drew the plan of the baſon in the midſt of the lawn: I dug it; the parterre of flowers that ſurround it ſhe cultivated, the ivy that ſhades the windows ſhe planted.

"Seven years ſhe has been the companion of my ſolitude; her lively affections, that vibrate at the leaſt kindneſs, her engaging manners, and her quick perception, in points of knowledge and taſte, ſometimes call me to myſelf, renew the early ſuavity of my heart, and there have been moments when, I have wiſhed it were poſſible for me to return to the ſocial intercourſe of humanity, that I might impreſs Antonia's mind with juſt opinions;

and while I taught her caution, guard her againſt that mean ſuſpicion that would endanger the purity of her heart.

"The firſt impreſſions my mind received were too ardent, too favourable to humanity: the ſhock that eraſed them was violent, and my feelings retreated 'till the two extremes touched.

"I had an only ſiſter; her huſband fell in the battle of Bunker's Hill: this dear girl is all that remains of her.

"Nature called me from ſolitude—I obeyed; went to my dear ſiſter, yielded her my ſympathy: it comforted, but could not ſave her: ſhe died; I received her

her laſt breath, arranged her concerns, and returned with her child to this dwelling.

Antonia wept. "Do not weep, Antonio," ſaid the recluſe; ſhe lifted her tearful eye to his face, preſſed his hand to her heart in ſilence; 'twas expreſſive.

Rodolpho could not arrange his thoughts into expreſſion, equal to his feelings: the gloomy language of the recluſe intereſted him, and however miſtaken he might think him in thus flying ſociety for the depravity of *one* man, and checking propenſities which it is the duty of humanity to cultivate, he could not prevail on himſelf to interrupt his narrative by obſervations, which, though juſt,

during the present state of his mind, rendered irritable by recollection, would disturb and distress, without reconciling him to their truth.

"The short time I remained in the world on my last visit, increased my disgust: I found I was forgotten; that I suffered a living *interment*; the impression the retired actions of the man of feeling makes on the mind of his fellow men, exists no longer than their immediate influence is felt: to his own heart he must look for the reward of his actions; his benevolence is primitive, and lives by a spontaneous movement; and if it were not its own reward, where would it be found?

"But

"But my opinions are perhaps prejudices, the effect of individual diſappointment: ſometimes in the quietude of reflection, the idea, that in this ſelfiſh ſecluſion I have not only miſtaken my deſtined courſe, but betrayed a cowardice that degrades, has given the pang of remorſe to my mind.

"Man is ennobled by reſiſting the ſtorm; I feel that conviction too late; I will no more trouble you with the wanderings of a mind warped by ſelfiſhneſs: I have brought you to the preſent period; its too late for me now to change the habitude of my mind; my paſt and preſent agitations have unnerved my frame; my race ſeems nearly complete; I have ſome concerns

for

for this dear girl's future welfare, that lay heavy on my mind: I muſt ſeek a protector for this innocent.

"When I firſt left the world, I realiſed great part of my property, and remitted it, to be placed in the Engliſh funds: the intereſt I have never called for; the decrees of the Congreſs have ſequeſtered my landed property, as an emigrant. I placed alſo the little my ſiſter left in the funds; I had retained a ſum of ſome conſequence to ſupply my few wants; for we are indebted to nature for the greater part of our temperate meals.

"I muſt make one more viſit to the world for Antonia's ſake, and then lay down

down to rest. My mind has too long dwelt on the dark side of humanity; I am not fit for the world; its garish habits would offend me.

"I have been so fortunate, during the war, as to have met with little interruption from the messengers of its evils: sometimes the rustic traveller, whom chance directs, calls at my cottage, partakes of my temperate meal, reposes on my humble couch, and when he departs, takes with him my wishes for his happiness, in a world from which I was driven.

"You are in the world, I repeat, if the prescience of countenance do not deceive me, you have natural urbanity; you will,

if

if you can, assist the desolate; and yet, the suavity of your manners may be deceptive.

"My friend (O, how chearing! how animating was once that epithet to my heart!) my friend had the external lustre of benevolence in his demeanor; the recluse became agitated: in a moment, he said, "you'll pardon this transient shade of doubt."

"I do not wonder at your doubts," said our soldier, "confidence would be weakness; it cannot offend me; for the man of true honour feels no gratification in the approbation that is not the result of judgment,

and

and between us action alone muſt be the criterion.

"I truſt your firſt impreſſions will remain, and become ſtrengthened by experience. Man is not an eulogiſt of himſelf to be depended on: if he be virtuous, the natural timidity of virtue will prevent his doing juſtice to his feelings; and if he be the reverſe, arrogance will give ſtrength to his deceptions. If you ſhould think proper to confide in me, to the extent of my power, the truſt ſhall be ſacred; prolix profeſſions my heart diſdains; my firſt impulſe is to act."

"I thank you," ſaid the recluſe, "and receive your engagement with confidence:

our time will be *too* ſhort at this meeting; if you will again, on your return, call at my dwelling, I will prepare in the interim my requeſt. My mind, at this moment, by recollection, is too diſturbed to make reſolves for futurity."

"I will attend you," ſaid Rodolpho, "as early as my duty will allow me; I feel a lively intereſt in your future reſolves; your paſt and preſent experience employ every reflecting power of my mind, I would ſay much to induce you to modulate your feelings more to the habits of the world.

"The Perſian foreſt produces a deſtructive tree; but it alſo preſents us with a

thouſand natural beauties: every poiſon has its antidote in nature; deception dwells in the world; but ſincerity in friendſhip, and conſtancy in love, are there alſo to be met with."

The recluſe ſat in a meditating attitude, and replied not.

Rodolpho now taking the hand of Antonia, ſaid——

"You love ſolitude:" our ſoldier might have aſked a wiſer queſtion of a *lively* girl of fifteen; but the early advances of love ſeem to lock up the intellects, and the firſt indications of it in a *wiſe man* is often an exhibition of apparent weakneſs;

weakneſs; but if the paſſion has merit for its ſource, the contraction is temporary, and the ſoul elevates and expands in proportion to the ſtrength of the mind and the force of paſſion.

"You love ſolitude," ſaid Rodolpho to Antonia, "This retreat is endeared to me," ſhe replied, "by a thouſand acts of tenderneſs—was my uncle in a deſert, inſtead of this ſhady fruitful wood, it would be equally dear to me.

"I do not know the world, but I ſhould like to hear a little more of it: I ſuppoſe there are good people in it; I think you are good. I knew no other being but my uncle and "Faithful," till I

knew

knew you. I do not wiſh to leave this wood; but I *now* wiſh you lived with us; you would then aſſiſt my uncle to cut wood, and plant the garden, for he is grown very weak lately. If you ſtay to-morrow you can help us, we have much to do before the cold ſeaſon comes.

"I *cannot* now," ſaid Rodolpho, "but I will ſoon return. Do you wiſh I ſhould."—

"Yes, indeed, I do."—"It was your voice I heard in the ſtorm laſt eve—was it not?"

"Yes: I ſing often to my uncle ſome *lines* he ſelects, or ſome *ſonnet* he compoſes.

He tells me the Almighty delights in the chearful ſong of virtue. It was 'humanity I invoked laſt night.

"Every morn and eve, after I have offered my thanks for the bleſſings of the day, and the repoſe of the night, I ſing; and the pleaſure I receive (while chaunting my thanks to him, whoſe bounty excites my gratitude, and whoſe power my admiration), is diſtinct from all others; my uncle, ſays it is the devotion of nature I feel."

It is, thought Rodolpho, and I fear, ſeldom felt but in the ſolitude of a wood.

While

While ſhe was ſpeaking, Rodolpho ſilently compared Antonia, and the natural ſimplicity of her ſentences, with thoſe fair ones, within the circle of faſhion and taſte, with whom he had converſed, and who had more frequently excited his *wonder* than his admiration, the maid of the wilderneſs had the advantage. The ſweet modulation of her voice, the peculiar *naiveté* in her accent, the ſylph-like delicacy of her perſon; and it may be her expreſſed wiſh for Rodolpho's ſociety, rivetted his ſoul in irreſiſtible fetters, and with the force of a 'magical ſpell bound up his faculties" to tenderneſs, and fixed them in love.

Our ſoldier could have liſtened for ever to talk in the language of a lover, ſo faſcinating is innocence, but the recluſe, who during the ſhort converſation of Antonia ſeemed abſtracted from all ſurrounding objects, again revived; and addreſſing Rodolpho, in reply to what he laſt ſaid, and on which he had been meditating, in a deep voice thus continued:—

"Could Prometheus, when chained to his rock of torment be awake to the chearing ſmile of ſpring, or the brilliant ſun of a ſummers day? Or could compaſſion check the gnawing of the vulture at his heart? *No*, he who has felt the ſevere laceration of the tender affections, of ardent illuſions, can find eaſe only in

ceaſing

ceaſing to exiſt. No partial conſolations, no chance pleaſure can afford him any efficacious aid."

"You judge without a trial," ſaid Rodolpho, "the ſoul is always more capable of ſublime exertions when it has been tempered in the furnace of the paſſions."

"And *you* ſpeak, perhaps, without experience," replied the ſolitary, "the misfortunes that ariſe from the paſſions engender a deſpair too fierce to permit a man under their controul to retain a free exerciſe of any faculty; their wild exceſſes deſtroy the energy of the ſoul. The man has no command of himſelf; like real tyrants they muſt either

be enthroned in power, or ſubdued in fetters.' All compromiſes with paſſions are merely imaginary. My mind has long been warped,—wreſted from its original harmony too violently for it ever to return to its natural tone; the main ſpring is broken. The world will increaſe my torments; my viſit to it muſt be ſhort. In your abſence, I will arrange my wiſhes. Examine your *heart*; eſtimate as well as you are able its ſtrength. I ſhall put it to the trial. Try it, perhaps, in '*the furnace of the paſſions.*' On your return I ſhall expect the faithful reſult of your ſelf examination."

"You ſhall have a candid account," replied Rodolpho.

The

The authoritative and ſolemn tone of voice in which the recluſe ſpoke; the ſingularity of the whole of the ſcene deeply impreſſed the mind of our ſoldier. Antonia's manners and perſon went ſtrait to his heart, and prepared to *fix* their *reſidence* there.

In the pauſe the ſolitary again made, Rodolpho pondered on the *truſt* he hinted at; *one* moment he thought it the property of his new-friend; *then* Antonia ſeemed the depoſit the recluſe meant to confide to his care. If *either* his reſolves were firm to prove himſelf worthy: the firſt excited neither emotion or fear, the latter excited both. Every paſſion alive in his heart to which the ſoul of man is acceſſible, he had

hitherto kept the balance on the ſide of virtue; *but* ſhould *Antonia* be the depoſit, would it preſerve the ſame preponderance? His heart ſaid "*yes*:"—His judgment whiſpered *doubt*; and perhaps, that doubt, will increaſe his ſtrength by keeping his integrity on the watch. Man, as well as woman, is often betrayed by a too great confidence in his own power.

Rodolpho, like his friend Therſton, inſtantly ſaw a world of happy days before him. Love and all its remunerating joys appeared in the perſpective. Nay, ſeemed approaching, and attended with circumſtances that would give a higher zeſt to enjoyment.

Ardent

Ardent impaſſioned minds, when excited to acts of kindneſs, find happineſs only in their accompliſhment. Our ſoldier became impatient for the riſing of the ſun, that he might depart to return again.—It *roſe*—he rouſed his men, took ſome refreſhment offered by Antonia, tenderly preſſed her hand—obſerved a tear of regret, (at leaſt he hoped it was) in her eye that thrilled to his heart.

"You will ſoon return," ſaid ſhe, as ſhe raiſed her eyes to his face, "every day I will walk the path you muſt take to return to the cottage; and I will ſing as I pace it, that you may know I am there to ſhow you the way; but do not again come in the eve; for ſometimes the lightning

deſtroys

deſtroys the talleſt oaks, and at this ſeaſon it is frequent after ſunſet."

Rodolpho *promiſed*; every tender paſſion ſwelled his heart, and ſcarcely could he refrain from preſſing her to it, but this was not the moment. He looked onward with the ardent hope of youth, that the hour *would* come.

The recluſe accompanied Rodolpho great part through the wood; marked every large tree as they paſſed it that he might know them on his return; and the laſt in the foreſt neareſt the road, *he* was to put a ſimilar mark on. The recluſe preſſed his hand tenderly at parting. "You will return," ſaid he.

"I

"I *will*," replied our ſoldier; and they ſeperated.

The recluſe looked back *once*, and Rodolpho was loſt to his ſight. He paced his way in deep melancholy to the cottage; and for ſome days the voice of Antonia loſt the power of charming.

The ſoldier Rodolpho left at the ſkirts of the wood, had taken ſhelter in a hut on the road ſide. As our wanderers came into the road they perceived him, and a negro making to the wood. Their pleaſure was mutual at their meeting. The poor man had waited till it was nearly dark, under violent apprehenſions, and then led his horſes till he came to the hut

hut of a negro; who filled him with terror at the danger of exploring the foreſt by night, and he ſat up impatiently waiting for the riſing of the ſun, that he might ſearch for Rodolpho, whom he concluded had loſt his way; and when they *met*, he was going in purſuit of him.

Rodolpho rewarded the negro, and mounted his horſe; as he rode onward he revolved the occurrences of the laſt nine hours in his mind. The ſhort relation of the recluſe afforded a uſeful leſſon, while it taught him the evils of an indiſcriminate credulity; in language equally ſtrong it deſcribed the error that the haſty deciſion of ardent minds, largely imbued with that benevolence which characteriſes

racteriſes them, are often led into by ſuffering the firſt impulſe of the heart to influence them before the judgment can counſel. He compaſſionated the ſufferings of the recluſe; but his judgment condemned and lamented the weakneſs of the mind, whoſe energies vaniſhed at the firſt trial, and whoſe heart contracted at the firſt diſappointment.

Such conduct, thought Rodolpho, appears more to be the reſult of wounded ſelf-love, than regret at the general deception and depravity of man. However contracted the circle in which we move, we cannot trace it without obſerving its unity broken. The friend, the *warm* eulogiſt of to-day, will give only the frigid

gid aſſent of a cool approbrion to-morrow; and the third, he will, perhaps, be ready to join the vulgar cry againſt actions that he is not capable, or will not be at the the trouble of tracing up to their motives; or if he has, he does not find them in unity with his own, and will not therefore appreciate their value.

Man indulges his caprice till he is led imperceptibly to depravity. If every virtuous mortal was to follow the recluſe, and fly to ſecluſion on the firſt ſhock he receives at the inſincerity of the world,—ſociety would loſe the advantage of example; and by depriving it of that, and the obſervation in what high eſtimation virtue is held even by vice, he becomes an

an enemy to his fellow men; and while in his retirement, he is priding himſelf that he is not like others, inſincere, an apoſtate to virtue, &c. he may with propriety be told, that though he purſues a different courſe, he produces the ſame effect, weakening the cauſe he profeſſes to ſupport.

That man only, thought our ſoldier, is truly eſtimable, who receives the goods and ills of life with calmneſs, and an equal mind; who lifts the deceptive veil which civilization has thrown o'er mortal events, and views them as they are; and who, while he laments that vice exiſts, and diſſeminates its lacerating evils, exhibits

hibits in his own actions the ſalutary effect of oppoſite habits.

To preſerve the nerve of fortitude ſtrong amidſt the ſtorms of fate, is the diſtinction of great minds. It is that only which gives pre-eminence, that ſets man above man, however his vanity may rank the pride of birth, or the evaneſcent advantages of wealth, that often ſicken in poſſeſſion.

Into what tender diſtreſs of mind has this miſtake of the recluſe involved him. The effervescence that nature infuſed into the ſoul, to keep in action the virtues of the heart, by a ſad perverſion now

ſerves

ſerves only to *keep* alive uſeleſs regrets. The conſtant ferment between the paſſions and the judgment is conſuming his frame; and the ſtronger his convictions of his error, the more rapid will be his decline. He will ſink to reſt, then what will become of Antonia! *Alone* in the world; a mark for the arts of the 'ſpecious, the flagitious.' But *I* will guard her from them."

The heart of our ſoldier expanded to joy, pure and unalloyed, at the reſolve. "There appears ſuch a ſingularity in my introduction, that I would fain perſuade myſelf I am deſtined to guard, to *lead* her through the *world*." (*Lovers* are often fataliſts).

"The ſudden partiality the recluſe has profeſſed for me, a ſtranger, and the confidence he meditates, evidently deſcribes the proſpenſity of the human mind, to retain any ſtrong feature that early habits have impreſſed.

"In me he ſhall not be deceived; his credulity in this inſtance, ſhall be as beneficial to him as my exertions can render it. He ſhall be convinced that ſincerity *is* the virtue of humanity. I will return and carry with me ſome teſtimony that I am worthy his confidence. I will ſolicit his leave to make an intereſt in the heart of Antonia; and *if* I ſucceed, I will aſk her of him; and ſhould *he* grant her to me. I will tranſplant her into the world,

through which I will honourably lead her; and what exquisite feelings must flow from watching her untutored heart expand to exhibit the impressions of native truth, and pass on to active virtue."

This chain of reflection was suddenly broken, by the view of the camp, to which he was travelling. By Colonel Fawcette he was received with every mark of respect; and it was then he presented him with a Captain's commission, in a regiment soon destined to return to England to recruit. The company he was *now* to *command*, was at the garrison; the former Captain had obtained leave some months before to return to England for his health. Accounts had been received of

his death; and Colonel Fawcette obtained the commiſſion to preſent our ſoldier.

Rodolpho waited on General C—n, who offered him his friendſhip at the table of Col. F—. "I rejoice to ſee you, young man," ſaid the General. "I congratulate you, on your preferment, and am pleaſed its over: you are now my *own*, and I promiſe never to loſe ſight of you till I ſee you a Colonel, *if* you preſs onward in the career of real honour as you have hitherto done. I have kept a ſtrict watch over you ſince I ſaw you, and you have verified my prediction. Here is my hand," ſaid he, "I repeat, I am your friend, in any way you may command."

"Action

"Action muſt prove my gratitude General," ſaid Rodolpho, "words are weak, and inſufficient vehicles; but of this be aſſured, I value your friendſhip too highly ever voluntarily to forfeit it by any deed dependant on *my* will alone."

The conciſe reply of Rodolpho pleaſed the General. Elaborate thanks he conſidered to be more the effect of ſtudy, than a ſpontaneous movement of the heart. Our ſoldier's promiſed mode of proving himſelf worthy his friendſhip, entered the General's open mind, and gratified the utmoſt boundary of his wiſhes.

They now converſed on familiar ſubjects.—Our ſoldier deſcribed his friends at the garriſon; and in confidence related his adventure in the wood.

"Your recluſe," ſaid the General, when Rodolpho had ended his relation, "is a greater coward than the poor fellow who flies from the whizzing of bullets, and the point of the ſword in the field of battle. I compaſſionate his weakneſs, but I fear there is a little contempt blended with it, that would prevent my conſolations, if I were to offer them, from being palatable to his feelings.

"The weakneſs of lamentation at ſuch evils degrade the man; nay reflect diſgrace

grace on our ſpecies; and we are individually called upon to elevate, not lower the ſtandard of human nature. I honour him to whom I can look *up*, and exclaim, this is a *man* whom proſperity cannot raiſe, nor adverſity depreſs! However if I can be of uſe, you may command me for him; and now I am in the admonitory mood—let me admoniſh you. This adventure in the wood promiſes to be an æra in your life, that will exhibit the ſtrength of virtue, or diſplay the baſeneſs of vice.

"The hour of temptation is approaching, young man, rally all your forces to defend the citadel of your heart; to retain that honour unſullied that I believe

to

to be resident there. You'll have need of as many watchmen as the king of Bohemia's castle, to guard those traitors that sometimes surprise us in our most confident moments, I mean the passions.

"And if this artless maid of the wilderness, this untutored child of nature has, which I seem inclined to believe, blended herself with your hopes, and your wishes, stand firm, and meet the assault like a *brave* soldier, whose honour shrinks from every species of *cruelty*; and that of destroying the blooming sweets of innocence is the blackest among all the dark catalogues of man's vices.—Accursed among his fellows is that blot in nature; him

him who wipes the blush from the cheek of innocence, and plants a blister there."

"I thank you General, for your counsel, and receive my honour, that curse shall never rest on my head," returned Rodolpho, "but I will confess to you, with the affectionate respect of a son, and the confidence of a friend, that this blooming, spotless maid, has entwined herself round my heart. The artless union of her charms; the unchecked chaste familiarity with which she treated me; but above all, her fascinating tenderness to her uncle, has bound my soul in willing fetters."

"Then

"Then may hymen unite you," ſaid the General, "I believe its the beſt wiſh I can offer for both."

"I may," replied Rodolpho, "ſubject myſelf to the cenſure of your ſtronger mind, and more tempered paſſions, when I declare my deſtiny is ſuſpended between happineſs and miſery, and that on Antonia depends, which ſtate ſhall in future be my experience."

"The completion of your wiſh is the extreme point of felicity, beyond that is miſery."

Much confidential converſation paſſed between the young ſoldier, and the experienced

perienced veteran. Every day as their characters were unfolded, by circumſtance and confidence, to the obſervation of each other, their friendſhip was ſtrengthened, and their pleaſures increaſed.

The attachment of youth with age is not ſo unproductive of pleaſure as the volatility of juvenile minds are from miſconception induced to ſuppoſe. They connect invariably the idea of aſperity and impatience with that of age. Such miſconception is a barrier to their acquiring a juſt knowledge of mankind.—The mind to which a long intercourſe with ſociety has given experience, and whoſe intellects are expanded by obſervation and reflection, is the moſt intereſting

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ing and amuſing page the youthful ſtudent can read—to recommend an attention to it cannot be improper.

The eve of the day appointed for the return of Rodolpho to the garriſon he went to take leave of Col. Fawcette, who had been abſent from the time he preſented him with the commiſſion, till the exening before our ſoldier's departure to his poſt. He was particularly ſtruck with his reception; the Colonel had aſſumed the ſame diſtant reſerve, the ſame unbounded hauteur, which had marked his demeanor before the circumſtance of the fire in his tent.

His addreſs, in return to the frankneſs of Rodolpho, if it did not amount to an inſult,

ſult, ſtepped on the very edge of licence. Our ſoldier for a moment was irritated to the boundary of endurance; but the next he recollected he had engaged on no material occurrence to act without the counſel of his veteran friend: he therefore did not notice it, but by aſſuming equal coolneſs, and, with a bow of formality, retired, and repaired to the General.

"Every day's experience," ſaid Rodolpho, as he entered the tent of the veteran, "throws ſome new light, imparts ſome new information of the varieties in human character. What a factitious ſet of beings we are! how oppoſite to the genuine precepts of nature do we often act!"

"True,"

"True," said the General, "but at twenty-two did your vanity mislead you? Did you imagine your penetration had pierced the thousand evelopes in which the heart of man is folded, that you are so surprised at the discovery of a new trait?"

"I anticipate your information, but allow me," said Rodolpho, "to relate the reception I met with from Col. Fawcette, on taking leave at the visit I'm this moment returned from."

"Go on," said the General, with a smile. "You were a witness that, on my arrival at camp, the Colonel met me with the ardour of a friend, and presented me the commission, with the look of a man, who,

who, in beſtowing a favour, received a pleaſure——"

"But I knew his countenance was no tranſcript of his heart," ſaid the General.

"He has this hour," ſaid Rodolpho, "on my viſiting him, received me with a look of ſuch frigidity, and an inſolence of manner, that has chilled every feeling of my heart, while it inflamed every particle of ſpirit in my ſoul; and had I not ſworn to myſelf as well as owed it to your friendſhip, to aſk the counſel of experience before I decided on any material occurrence, I ſhould inſtantly have returned him the commiſſion, and ſubjected myſelf to martial cenſure, by challenging him."

"It's

"*It's as well not,*" said the General, coolly, "you would have gratified him, by injuring yourself. I have not seen him since you received the commission, but I presaged your reception. He considers you his inferior; you have conferred an obligation on him;—an evil, in his idea, the greatest in the long catalogue which man is doomed to endure; and unfortunately the obligation was of such a nature, that he could not pass over in the general way; every breath he drew kept awake the recollection, that to you he was indebted for the power of breathing at present; for as to superior agency, it is dislodged from his chain of ideas: you cannot imagine a more acute torment than his pride endured, while he laboured under the consciousness

of

of an obligation to an inferior; he now conſiders he has returned it; he has given you rank, of all poſſeſſions the moſt dear to him; and what we eſtimate highly ourſelves vanity tells us *muſt* be the moſt *valuable*; deceptive manners are no longer neceſſary, and the man is returned to himſelf, Col. Fawcette altogether, and ſo let him remain: were you to attempt to mend him, his improvement would not reward your labour."

"But had I known ſuch a trait exiſted, I would have walked a private if the alternative had been offered me, even to the boundary of my life, 'ere I would have afforded his contracted heart relief, by accepting his return. I refer myſelf to you,

General, can I retain my rank with honour, after receiving such indignant treatment?—To my own conceptions I cannot."

"If your arrangement for your future journey through life is to quarrel with ignorance and folly wherever you meet it," replied the general, "don't depend upon me for a second—for I laugh at both; and trust me such characters have their use—they assist to fix wavering minds, by exhibiting the contractions of ignorance, and the deformity of arrogance. If you take my counsel, leave him to himself. Nature, whose sublime feature is equality, keeps the balance even; by moulding into the general mass, which com-

poses

poſes ſuch characters, a diſpoſition to torment themſelves. At this moment he is ſmarting at the idea, that his rank will not always command homage: you have convinced him of the truth more than any inferior he has yet met with."

"I yield," ſaid Rodolpho, "but it is to you; not my own opinion."

"You are young," replied the General; "you have much to learn, much to endure. In the ſeaſon of youth, before the world unfolds its ample page, we catch the ſpring that vibrates to joy from every ſun beam that glitters o'er our

heads, bask under its chearing influence, and dream not that to-morrow's beam may be impregnated with the tear of sorrow, that deception may have drawn from our hearts.

"You are now in the age of genial warmth—every virtue alive in your heart; you start at each new discovery you make, of the depravity of man, and shrink from each new folly as it opens to your view: believe me, your wonder will insensibly lessen as your experience with mankind increases; let me counsel you never to mix with open vice, nor endeavour to pierce into concealed. The most dreadful scenes lose their effect on our visual

ſual perception, by frequent contemplation; and there is an analogy in our mental feelings, a minute and frequent obſervance of poliſhed vice, unleſs we have the immediate power of calling up the reflection on its ultimate conſequences, at the moment of obſervation, weakens our natural diſguſt, and we often become victims in the hour of fancied ſecurity; the example of the open, the daring villain, I do not point at—but at him, who, under the ſemblance of virtue, conceals the deformity of vice, the ignus fatuus man, that lives to deſtroy.

"I have been led almoſt imperceptibly to talk thus to you—I feel you do not need

it, but the repetition of experienced truths will animate you."

"From you, General, they will be stimulatives to virtuous exertion," said Rodolpho, "I feel for you the affection and reverence due to a father; 'ere I knew his value, I loft mine. I have (I hope) yet a mother—may fhe, one day, General, have an opportunity of adding her thanks to mine, for the kindneſs of our preſent intertainer."

"Its mutual, its mutual," replied the General.

Rodolpho took leave of his veteran friend; and as he ſhook his hand at ſeparating

separating the two before his departure for the cottage in the wood, he said:

"Remember, my young friend, you are going to the post of danger, and I expect to hear honour keeps her standard erect: if it once verges, our intercourse ends."

"It will never cease, then," returned the young hero, with firmness; "my life is not so dear to me as your good opinion."

"And I repeat, if I can be of use to the recluse," said the veteran, "or your maid of the forest, I am willing."

Thus parted the friends.

With the first rays of the sun that gilded the horizon, Rudolpho began his journey to the mortage of the recluse; while in sight of the camp he reflected on the late conduct of Col. Fawcett.

What a desolation of heart must he feel, thought our soldier: he looks round an extended circle, and sees no eye beam an interest in his happiness—no breast heave with sympathy at his sorrows. Insensate stupidity, thus to divest himself of all that is most to be covetted in existence, the approbation of his fellow mortals, the most complacent of all pleasures; by rendering his heart thus callous, he places a gulph, wide, impassible, between himself and real happiness.

The

The discovery of error in another is not among the pleasurable sensations of a philanthrophic mind; but it is often useful; gives a stronger impulse to virtue, to press onward and escape the judgment that we are obliged to give of those who suffer caprice, the parent of a train of errors, to obscure the genuine dispositions of the soul.

Rodolphe made his resolves; they were in unison with decided rectitude, and mellodised his feelings: love, hope, and Antonia, with all their charming dependencies, claimed his thoughts, dispelled every other idea, and rendered his ride to the skirts of the wood, a point in his life that expectation made interesting.

When

When he arrived near the oak he had left marked after leaving the recluſe, he gave his horſe to the ſoldier that attended him, and with his former companions proceeded on foot through the foreſt.

At every new direction the path took, he ſtood a moment to liſten for the promiſed voice of Antonia.

"The day is beautiful," ſaid he, "but I hear her not:—the native vanity of man's heart, aided by my wiſhes, have miſlead me; the impreſſion I flattered myſelf I had made on her fancy, and hoped would lead to her heart, was evaneſcent."

Not

Not now, as before, did he pace the intricacies of the wood, "lulled by the ſerenity of the ſcene to the quietude of forgetfulneſs"—expectation and uncertainty, ſenſations well calculated to keep the heart of man awake, with their general attendants, hope and fear, rendered him ſuſceptible of the loweſt ſound, and the minuteſt perception: but the voice he wiſhed to hear, the form he longed to view, appeared not—a thouſand ideas of what might have occurred in the three weeks he had been abſent, combined to caſt a ſhade of apprehenſion over his thoughts, that checked the charming anticipations of hope.

When

When he drew near the winding path to the cottage, he was ſtruck with its deſolate and neglected appearance. The borders that the hand of Antonia had planted with variety of flowers, and fenced with the pliant branches of oſier, were withered; the climbing woodbine, and ſweet bluſhing roſe, (emblem of her beauty and blooming innocence), that ſhe had taught to cluſp the unyielding lofty oak, quitted their ſtation, and hung in wild diſorder.

"I left this ſpot," ſaid Rodolpho, as he ſtood penſively viewing the withered bloſſoms, "rich in beauty, ſhedding nature's perfume around, that chears the heart, and vivifies the ſenſes:—in three

ſhort

ſhort weeks all is changed,—the *coldneſs* of *neglect* has chilled their ſource; they fade, they droop, and *die*.—Mournful emblem of that ill-fated being, whoſe ſenſibilities have repoſed on the ſoothings of ſympathy, and whoſe hard deſtiny is to mourn their privation.

Every ſtep our ſoldier advanced increaſed his apprehenſions;—"ſome evil, Henry," ſaid he to his ſervant, "I fear has happened to our kind friends at the cottage, or we ſhould not ſee the ſhrubs ſo fallen and neglected."

"God forbid, Sir, that any of thoſe villains that frightened the ladies at the garriſon, ſhould have been here in our abſence,"

ſence," returned Henry. "It looks like ſome of their ravaging plundering work here."

They entered the embowered walk that led immediately to the cottage door. All was ſtill, they ſtood a moment to liſten.

"Perhaps," ſaid Rodolpho, "they are retired to the receſs in the wood that the recluſe ſpoke of."

"I *don't* ſee *no* path but the one we came," returned Henry; "however I hope they have not hurt that pretty little creature, who gave us our breakfaſt, and ſpoke ſo kind and ſo ſweetly, that it made my heart dance in my body; and when

when she said to you, Sir, 'pray return soon.'—"God bless ye, muttered I to myself, *I* wish we were never to leave ye:—*I* would work for ye:—Ay, and die for ye too, if it needed.—I don't know how it is, but my heart bounds, and jumps about in my breast, as if it wanted to fly out when such a pretty creature speaks so kindly; it makes me feel *I don't* know how.—I laugh, but seems to me *then*, I had rather cry.—I had a mind to—that morning when she repeated, as you shook hands with her, '*indeed*, I wish your return.' "Ah, thought I, to myself, I wish I was a king for your sake; you should be as happy as you are handsome, if money would make you so.—She is not like our

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London ladies, Sir—God *mend* them!—They look on poor people worse than dogs.

"I shall never forget what that *there* lady said, you and I saw at the military cap-shop in Bond-Street, that terrible cold snowy winter.—There was Colonel T— in the shop,—don't you remember it Sir?"

Rodolpho did not reply, and Henry went on:—"The Colonel went and handed her out of her fine carriage; the poor fellow who rode behind was frozen—he could not *feel* his feet, nor his hands neither.

"Good God, my lady," ſaid the Colonel as he led her in, "what a morning is this for *you* to come out in.—You muſt be frozen."—

"O, its quite delightful," replied ſhe, (I ſhall never forget her words) "I always drive out ſuch mornings as theſe; its the higheſt amuſement in the world to ride through the ſtreets; and as my chariot wheels bound o'er the ſnowy way, and the horſes are almoſt obſcured in the ſteam from their mouths, to view the poor devils on foot, ſlipping and ſliding about till at laſt they tumble, and *as they riſe* caſt a look of envy at my ladyſhip lolling at my eaſe, wrapped in furs from head to foot; even chloe," ſaid ſhe, as ſhe re-

ceived a little ugly pug dog from the foot-man—"*now* chloe barks and jumps for joy as we drive."

"Curse you and your dog too, thought I;—you have it in this world, God only knows who will have it in the next—both I hope; but this I know, I would not change this knot on my shoulder for all your ladyship's wealth, if I muſt take your heart in its preſent trim into the bargain.

"Now I'm talking, and who knows when we get to the cottage, perhaps," ſaid he, with a figh, "we ſhall find that ſome of our *gentlemen*, who like her ladyſhip, conſider only their own pleaſure, have

have taken her away; then what is become of the *old* gentleman, her uncle! God preſerve them both, I ſay; they *ſaved us.*" "Amen," ſaid the ſoldier behind.

While Henry was thus giving his honeſt heart relief, by commending youthful philanthropy, and expreſſing reſentment againſt poliſhed inſenſibility, Rodolpho was liſtening to the ſoft murmuring of a voice in the thicket. His attention was engroſſed; but the expreſſed fears of Henry for Antonia's ſafety ſtruck louder on his ear even than her praiſes, and vibrated to his heart; and without noticeing the eulogium of the honeſt fellow,

"It is Antonia," said he, "complaining, she is in danger." With the speed of apprehension he sprang forward, and just as he reached the back of the cottage, the recluse leaning on the shoulder of the lovely maid, opened a passage from the thicket that led from the recess in the wood!—Rodolpho started with surprise, and when he lifted his eyes to the recluse sorrow united, and checked expression. His countenance had a deeper shade of gloom, and his frame was more shrunk.

The moment Antonia's eye rested on Rodolpho, it sparkled tenderness, and she extended her hand, and exclaimed: "Why did you not come before? every night

night I prayed I might see you on the morrow, and every morn, that you might return ere the eve arrived. But now you are come, my dear uncle will get better, and *I* shall be *happy*."

The recluse held out his shrunk hand to our soldier; his languid eye emitted a faint ray of pleasure. "Alas!" said he, "soon I shall be beyond the reach of mortal evils; *then* God shield thee, Antonia.—Welcome, my young friend," and he pressed the held-out hand of our soldier to his heart. "Your presence consoles me."—They entered the cottage.

"I have brought back a heart," said our soldier, when the *recluse* was seated,

"animated with the hope of being useful to you, and this sweet innocent.—I intreat I may know the full extent of your wishes, and my prompt and *ardent* endeavours shall prove my sincerity."

"I'm satisfied," replied the recluse, in a tremulous voice.

Antonia looked at him—the tear of tenderness floated in her eye. "You are faint," said she, and instantly fled to prepare a cordial for the invalid. She returned in an instant; kissed him, *tasted* the medicine first, and as she presented it,—"Take this, my dear uncle," said she. It will revive you; we have *walked far*."

"It

"It will, my love," replied the recluſe; and he drank the cordial.—As he returned the glaſs to Antonia he bleſſed her.

She wiped the tears from her eyes, and looking chearfully in his face: "Thank you, my dear uncle; how ſweet and chearing to my heart is your bleſſing.—O God!" ſaid ſhe, falling on her knees, and lifting her hands and eyes to heaven. "O God, long ſpare to me the bleſſing of my dear uncle.—His bleſſing ſeems *thy* benediction, for he is good; a ſpirit thou haſt chaſtened, now filled with holy inſpiration and mortal affections, that ſweet union that nature tells me is the religion of the heart."

For-

For a moment her eye-lids fell; ſhe opened them, roſe from her knees, again kiſſed her uncle, and her countenance beamed with a placid chearfulneſs, that ever follows a *ſincere* addreſs to him whom no bound can contain, no ſimilitude expreſs.

Every nerve of Rodolpho's ſoul thrilled with admiration. "This is the pure unreſerved devotion of nature, that flows from the fountain of the feelings," ſaid he, "unconſcious at the moment of all but its inſpirations." Our ſoldier had a heart that could ſtand the rough aſſault of adverſity, and reaſon himſelf to content, obſerve the follies and vices of the multitude, and expreſs his diſguſt or abhorrence, as they reached

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the full compaſs of depravity, with all the force of language, and the advantage of the argument; but *ſilence* was now the evidence of feeling—totally abſorbed in the contemplation of her pure, gentle, and innocent ſoul, that poured forth all its feelings from 'the fountain' of purity: he ſpake not, but the veloſity of his thoughts, which, like lightening, darted in quick ſucceſſion, ſaid love, confidence, ſecluſion, and tranquillity, ever labour with alternate reſt, and Antonia are the limits of happineſs—a few hours only have I known her—but a minute is ſufficient for a man of feeling to eſtimate her innocence; in her nature diſplays herſelf in her moſt enchanting characters, blooms on her cheek,

ſparkles

ſparkles in her eye, and ſpeaks in every word ſhe utters."

END OF VOL. III.

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